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**For Immediate Release**

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**LEWISTOWN, POLSON, CULBERTSON, GLASGOW, BOZEMAN AND UTICA  
PROJECTS AWARDED \$200,000 IN TOURISM “BED TAX” GRANTS**

**Helena, MT—October 16, 2006** – Governor Brian Schweitzer announces that Lewistown’s Charlie Russell Chew Choo Dinner Tour Train, Polson’s John Dowdall Theatre, the Culbertson Museum, Glasgow’s Pioneer Museum and Valley Event Center, Bozeman-based Montana Shakespeare in the Parks and the Utica Community Center are the recipients of \$200,000 from the Montana Department of Commerce’s 2006 Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) “bed tax” grant funds. The grants will assist these organizations in the completion of tourism-related facility improvements.

Montana Department of Commerce Director Anthony J. Preite approved the TIIP grant funding for the seven tourism-related projects following recommendations from the Department of Commerce Montana Promotion Division staff and the state’s Tourism Advisory Council. The seven TIIP grant recipients were selected from 38 applications requesting \$1.69 million from the Commerce Department program.

“The investment of tourism ‘bed tax’ dollars into these seven projects will leverage \$1.8 million in community, state, federal and foundation dollars, creating and supporting local construction and service industry jobs,” Preite said in approving the TIIP Grant Awards. He added that “these projects strengthen Montana’s appeal as a visitor destination, something that benefits the entire state.”

The 2006 TIIP Grant Awards include:

\$64,322	Lewistown Area Chamber of Commerce for upgrade and improvement of the passenger train cars used for the Charlie Russell Chew Choo Dinner Tour Train
\$27,000	Mission Valley Friends of the Arts for energy efficient windows and doors to extend the performance season at the historic John Dowdall Theatre in Polson
\$20,693	Friends of the Pioneer Museum for exterior building improvements and energy efficiency measures at Glasgow’s Pioneer Museum

\$27,985	Culbertson Museum Club, Inc., for completion of an exhibit and event building
\$20,000	Montana Shakespeare in the Parks for the purchase of a new touring van
\$20,000	HiLine Youth Hockey Association for second floor conference and meeting room space for the Glasgow's multi-use event facility
\$20,000	Judith Basin County for renovation of the Utica Community Center as an event and activity center

Since 1995, TIIP grants have provided over \$2.4million in tourism “bed tax” funds to 56 projects in 37 Montana communities. These TIIP-assisted projects represent a total investment of over \$31 million in Montana’s tourism-related infrastructure.

TIIP grants funds are provided by 4% of the state’s tourism “bed tax” which is assessed on the lodging price of all accommodations across Montana, including campgrounds. The grants are awarded through a competitive process and require a \$1 local match for every \$2 provided by grant funds.

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